

Mr. *Wetmore's*
LETTER
IN
VINDICATION
OF
The Professors of the Church of
England in Connecticut.



A
VINDICATION
OF

The Professors of the Church
of *England* in *Connecticut*.

Against

The Invectives contained in a Sermon
preached at *Stanford* by Mr. *Noah
Hobart*, Dec. 31. 1746.

In a

LETTER

To a

FRIEND.

By JAMES WETMORE, A. M.

Rector of the Parish of *Rye*, and Missionary from the venerable
SOCIETY for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign Parts.

Ex defendendo, quam ex accusando uberior gloria comparatur.
CICERO.

BOSTON: N. E.

Printed and Sold by ROGERS and FOWLE in Queen-street,
MDCCXLVII.

THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH
OF BRISTOL

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A
L E T T E R

To a F R I E N D.

S I R,

I Should have excused my self the Trouble of defending the Constitution of the Church of *England* against the Objections in Mr. *Hobart's* Sermon, and deferred the Task, to some abler Pen ; but to gratify your Request, and take a Share of the Burthen with my Brethren, I willingly comply with your Desire, not discerning any Difficulty in the Undertaking, that will exceed a very ordinary Capacity. You will not, I presume, expect that I should trouble my self or you, with Remarks upon any Thing in his Discourse, besides those Passages that are designed to asperse our Constitution ; and deter serious People from conforming to the Worship and Discipline of the national established Church of *England*. And as Opportunities are now given for such Conformity, by having Congregations in Communion with the Church of *England*, in many of your Towns ; the Reasons for conforming, will deserve the serious Attention of such People as prefer no Interest whatsoever to that of pleasing GOD, and securing their eternal Happiness ; which can only be done, by a strict and careful Practice of their whole Duty,
whatever

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whatever Temptations may assault their Virtue. And if any Objections, are thought weighty and forceable, against conforming, we should all of us be pleased to see them offered in their full Strength; that we may thereby be reclaimed from destructive Errors, if we have embraced them, or have Opportunity, by refuting such, in the Spirit of Meekness, to represent Truth in its native Lustre, that it may invite the Embraces of all such as are honestly disposed to receive it.

Mr. *Hobart's* Attack upon the Constitution of the Church of *England*, being designed to deter Men from conforming, especially in *New-England*; it will be proper to consider the Force of his Objections, as they may be intended.

1. Against the Safety or Lawfulness of the Communion of the Church of *England*, especially in *Connecticut*.
2. Against the Expediency. Or,
3. Against the Necessity of conforming in Point of Duty.

We assert the Communion of the Church of *England*, in all the Territories belonging to the Kingdom of *England*, to be safe and lawful, in Respect of the Laws of GOD and Man: we assert it to be, not only expedient, but necessary too, in Order to discharge the Duty we owe to GOD, and the Peace and Order of Society, that every Man that has Opportunity, should actually embrace this Communion. Men not only consistently with their Duty *may*, but to discharge their Duty *must*, be of the Communion of the Church of *England*, if they are Members of the Nation of *England*.

These must be supposed to be the real Sentiments of all those, who endeavour to proselite Men from every Sect to the Communion of the established Church; and I will offer something for Confirmation hereof before I finish. But shall begin with considering Mr. *Hobart's* Objections:

I. As they seem to be levelled against the Safety or Lawfulness of this Communion, especially in *Connecticut*, where his Discourse was delivered.

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I say *seem* to be levelled, because most of his Readers will understand that to be the Sequel of his Objections ; and that they would not be worth the Pains he takes, if this Conclusion was not to be inferred : Although he has not indeed put his Arguments in Mood and Figure.

To be *Fellow-Labourers*, he calls an *Important Part of the Ministerial Character*. Page 10. I shall not crack my Brains to comprehend the Profundity of this Assertion. But this being the Theme of his Discourse ; he would have his Hearers consider and comprehend, that all Ministers of Christ, are *Fellow-Labourers*. Thus he explains his Sense of being *Fellow-Labourers* ; some would think he *seems* to conclude, that Men can't be Ministers of Christ, if they don't answer his Description in that "*Important Part of the ministerial Character* : And then, he tells us, Page 20. "*There are several Things opposite hereto, and which, wherever they obtain, prevent Ministers acting in the Character under which they are mentioned in his Text,*" i. e. *Fellow-Labourers*.— Then he adds, "*A fixed PRELACY in the Church is another Thing repugnant to, and destructive of that Equality which renders Gospel-Ministers Fellow-Labourers*. This you all know (quoth he) obtains in the "*Church of England* ;" The Consequence must at least, *seem to be*, that the Communion of the Church of England is unsafe, Men can't safely or lawfully in the Sight of GOD join with them, because so *important* a Part of the ministerial Character is wanting among them. He lays so much Stress upon this *Important* Matter, that I can't think any indifferent Person will say I have put a forced Construction upon his Discourse, when I make the Conclusion to be a *seeming* to say, that our Ministry is so defective in an *Important* Part of the Character, that no serious Person should venture to join himself to such a Communion. What he says more largely and particularly, of the Imperfection of the ministerial Character, Page 21, &c. must be understood as delivered with a Design to *seem* at least to conclude, that so important Defects attend the Ministry of our Church, that a serious Christian should be afraid to become one of our Communion. Especially seeing

Another

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Another Objection lies against the Safety and Lawfulness of joining with the Church of *England* in *Connecticut*, where his Discourse was delivered, *viz.* That by leaving the Assemblies of Worshippers there formed, and going over to the Church of *England* Profession, he says, "They contract the awful Guilt of Schism, run into Parties, promote Separations, divide and disturb the Peace of the Church, rend, not the Coat, but the Body of Christ." Page 25, 26. Upon which he thus expostulates, "Can you answer it to GOD or your own Consciences," &c. So that the Objections against the Safety and Lawfulness of our Communion, may be fairly understood or comprized under these two Heads. Unto which I shall reply in Order.

1. By considering the Force of all his Objections against the Validity and Regularity of our Ministry, on Account of the Hierarchy of our Church; i. e. The Prelacy established.

His Text is *Philemon*, ver. 24. *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my Fellow-Labourers.* The Sum of his Exposition is, that true Ministers of the Gospel concur together, help, and not hinder one another in promoting the Designs of redeeming Grace, and are equal to one another in Power and Office. I am only at present concerned to examine his Arguments for levelling all Orders in the Church; and I shall be very willing to join in condemning all Practices that may be called counter-working the Ministers of Christ. I esteem none as *Fellow-Labourers* with me, whose Works are a Controvention of my chief Designs: But I would carry this important Affair of being *Fellow-Labourers*, a little higher than Mr. *Hobart* has done; he only makes it necessary that the present Set of Ministers, (and perhaps it may seem as if he had his Eye only to *Connecticut*) should be *Fellow-Labourers*; that they should not oppose one another.

It don't seem to me; that he intended it should be necessary for the Ministers of his Perswasion in *Connecticut* to be *Fellow-Labourers*, and therefore not oppose the Twenty-Six Bishops in *England*; much less our half Ministers (as he would have them esteemed) the Presbyters. Nay, I would have the

the Matter carried higher still ; I am for being a *Fellow-Labourer* with St. Paul himself, as *Marcus and Lucas* were said to be : This is applicable to all true Ministers, they are *Fellow-Labourers* with the *holy Apostles* ; and more than this, they are *Workers together* with GOD too. Which is the same Word *Synergoi* in the Original, 1 Cor. iii. 9. This the Apostle presumed to assert of himself and *Apostles* ; and I presume he would have thought the Man very weak in his Intellectuals, who should have charged him with Blasphemy, for making himself *equal* with GOD, his Fellow-Officer, with *equal* Power, without Dependence or Subordination : As Mr. Hobart asserts the important Sense of that Word to be.

There is nothing at all in his Text to restrict the Sense of the Word *Fellow-Labourers*, and oblige us to understand it in any different Sense from that, the same Apostle useth it in, when he says of himself and *Apostles*, that they are *Synergoi*, with GOD ; and there is nothing in his Text to limit the Word to any other Sense than the Word *Fellow-Labourers* will properly bear, when applied to a Father and his Sons, or a Master and his Servants, labouring together to accomplish the same Work. And who would not think the Man, to be of very shallow Capacities, that would infer an *Equality* between Father and Sons, and between Masters and Servants, because they are *Synergoi*, Workers together in the same Field ? In producing an Effect many efficient Causes may concur ; one Principal, the rest Adjuncts, in Subordination, Concauses or *Synergoi*, each one a Cause in Proportion to his Efficiency ; *Eque Cause quamvis non equales*. The highest Officer in the Church may properly call a Number of the meanest Christians, *Fellow-Christians* ; the greatest Prince, may call a Number of Beggars *Fellow-Men* ; and the greatest General, may call his Subalterns *Fellow-Officers*, and *Fellow-Soldiers* ; and what Man would infer an *Equality* in these Cases, from such Expressions, unless Mr. Hobart, to carry on a Design of deluding ignorant People ?

I don't remember ever to have seen this Text of Mr. Hobart's produced for demolishing the Hierarchy, his singular
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Sagacity must have the Applause, of discovering in this Text a Force that was never seen before, and St. Paul himself was ignorant of; or else I am sure he would never have said of himself and other Ministers, we are *Synergoi*, with GOD. For if that Word had been capable in Reality of such a Construction as Mr. Hobart has put upon it, I mean to import Equality in Office or Efficiency, he that had more Goodness than to receive divine Honours, when the People would have forced them upon him, *Acts* 14. 14. would have had so much Caution as not to have given such a Handle to idolatrous Superstition, as it must have done to claim Equality with GOD.

I believe Mr. Hobart is the first Man that ever thought of making *Demas* an Apostle, of equal Authority with St. Paul, and the *Apostles* so called, to distinguish them from others that had ministerial Power and Authority in the Church. And if *Marcus* was not advanced to the Episcopate, when St. Paul called him *Fellow Labourer*, as Mr. Hobart concludes he could not be, Page 24. i. e. that he could not till some Years after be, what the best Records of Antiquity tell us he was at length, the first Bishop of *Alexandria*, we may finish the Retutation of Mr. Hobart's Argument for Equality drawn from St. Paul's *Synergoi* in this Text, by observing the Imparity at that Time between St. Paul and *Marcus*; the one an *Apostle*, the other his *Deacon*, for the English Word *Minister* is in the Original *Diaconos*; contrary to Mr. Hobart's Observation, Page 16, that "the *Deacons* are an Order inferior to the *Ministry* properly so called:" For the *Ministry* properly so called, is in Greek *Diaconia*, and *Ministers* properly so called in the New-Testament, *Diaconoi*, Deacons.

And thus when Mr. Hobart thinks St. Paul was ordained to the Apostolate, with *Barnabas*, *Acts* 13. and went upon the Work of converting the Gentiles; *Paul* and *Barnabas* Apostles, had this same *Mark*, who was also called *John*, for their Minister, in the Original *Diaconos*. *Acts* 13. 5. That this was the same *Marcus*, Mr. Hobart allows Page 7. and that he accompanied *Paul* and *Barnabas* from *Jerusalem* to *Antioch*, just before their Separation to this Work.

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Acts 12. 25. Now as he was with them at *Antioch*, when they were thus solemnly separated, by what Mr. *Hobart* will have an Ordination, Page 18. came with them from *Jerusalem*, when they had fulfilled their Ministry, was rather their Attendant than they his, for 'tis said, *They* took with them *John* whose Sir-name was *Mark*. And when those two, by the Command of the Holy Ghost, had that solemn Separation, which Mr. *Hobart* calls Ordination, and no Mention of *Mark* in this Designation, nor Reason to believe he was ordained with them, and yet went forth to the Work with them their *Synergos*, called their Minister, *Diatonos*, Deacon; surely we have all the Reason in the World, to consider them in a great *Inequality*, both as to Office and Efficiency, and he must be more than weak, that will not acknowledge it; and therefore confess that Mr. *Hobart's* Text, had no Aim to equalize every Minister with the Bishops of the Church; and whatever his other Arguments may prove, this Text will infer nothing at all to the Prejudice of the Form of Government, in the Church of *England*, nor argue any Defect in the Orders of our Presbyters, although they don't claim the Dignity or Power of Bishops.

But perhaps some of his Readers may think his Argument for Equality among Gospel Ministers, taken from the Commission our Saviour gave to his Apostles, being but one and the same, designed for all Ministers, may exclude all Imparity in Office and Power; although the same may not be inferred from their being *Fellow-Labourers*.

This is an Argument that has been used before him; and may amuse inattentive Readers, but is nothing more than Amusement; far from being a sufficient Foundation to conclude that our Communion must be dangerous, or unsafe from any Effects of restraining the Power of Ordination and chiefest Jurisdiction to the Bishops, although but 26 among many Thousands of the inferior Clergy.

Mr. *Hobart's* Design is to asperse our Constitution in Regard of the Presbyter's Office, and perswade his ignorant and inattentive Readers, that such of the Clergy of the Church of

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of England as preach and administer Sacraments in this Country, not claiming all the Powers that Christ gave his Apostles by the Commission *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. can have no Power at all.

Our Bishops claiming all the Powers given by that Commission to the Apostles, may be truly the Apostle's *Successors*; and if there were Ministers *subordinate* and inferior to the Apostles in the Church, their Fellow-Labourers and Fellow-Officers too in a *lower Order* and Rank of Ministry, while the *Apostles* themselves presided, and exercised a prelatical Jurisdiction; I can't see how their Commission which was as much *one* and the *same* while they lived, as it has been since, should have such a restraining Nature *now*; that it must absolutely in its Nature, forbid all Inequality of Powers, among such as derive any Power from it, as Mr. *Hobart* seems to dream.

The Sum of what he would have his Readers believe is Page 17. "In a Word, the Commission Christ gave his Ministers is one and the same; all to whom this Commission belongs have full and equal Right to use all the Power and Authority contained in it; and they to whom it does not belong, are *no Ministers of Christ*, nor do they derive any Authority from him."

If Mr. *Hobart* thinks these Propositions have a necessary Connexion, I must beg Leave to be of another Mind: "The Commission one and the same, therefore all to whom it belongs have full and equal Right to all the Powers, &c!" The Weakness of this Inference may appear from his own Parallel Instance, the Charter of *Connecticut*, which is one, but one and the same, which he says is the Governor's Commission, and if so, then the Lieutenant-Governor and Assistants and Judges and Justices and Captains, in *different* and *distinct* Orders and with very different Powers arising from *one* Charter, and all authorized by it, not in *Equality*, although the Charter one and the same.

But the Case of *Connecticut* Charter brought by Mr. *Hobart* to illustrate the Nature of the Apostles Commission, I think

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think affords little of Argument or Illustration : Let us consider how far there may be any Appearance of Truth in what Mr. *Hobart* asserts, and wherein his Mistake lies. " All to whom this Commission belongs have full and equal " Right to use all the Power and Authority contained in it : Says Mr. *Hobart*.

Ans. 1. With Respect to the Apostles who were immediately authorized to gather and govern the Church by this Commission, it seems to make them Equals in that Power : Certainly it does not subject some unto any one of their Number : In short there is no Pope established by this Commission : And yet I dare not say, that a Primate among the Apostles was repugnant to any Thing contained in this Commission, provided he had been regularly chosen by the College of Apostles, who seem to have a very ample Power given them, and much left to their Wisdom and Prudence ; especially under the Guidance of *Inspiration*. And if for the more effectually promoting the great Design of their being authorized with this ample Power, they had thought fit, or should have been afterwards directed by the *Holy Ghost*, to appoint a President and Vice-President out of their Number, and then should have decreed, that in ordaining Colleagues in the Apostolate one of these should preside, and no such Ordination performed without the President or Vice-President : And if they had been directed by the Holy Ghost, to establish Presidents and Vice-Presidents so many as should be sufficient for Admission of Colleagues into the Apostolate in all Ages and Places, I can't conceive any Clause of the Commission *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. would have been contravened thereby, I see no Clause forbidding such an Imparity, when it should be regularly established.

And as Mr. *Hobart* allows, that this Commission, enabled them to provide a Succession in their Office, Page 18. — I think we may fairly suppose also, it sufficiently authorized them to concert such Measures, and establish such Rules, as might seem convenient in an Affair of so much Importance to the Church, as the Succession in the Apostolate, or Episcopate which is the same, should be ; that faithful Men in every Age, might succeed in that sacred Office, and the Church

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Church secured against Imposture, and every Danger of Interruption in the Line of Succession ; where so much depended upon that.

That our Saviour gave his Apostles such an ample Power, as included Authority to establish Rules and Orders, for well discharging the great Trust committed to them by their Commission, which made them joint Colleagues, in *disciplining all Nations and teaching them to observe and do all Things whatsoever Christ had commanded* ; i. e. to behave themselves as the Disciples of Christ in all Instances of Duty, in order to obtain the Happiness and Salvation he came into the World to procure for them ; that the Apostles, I say had Authority, by their Commission, to settle and establish Rules and Orders for well discharging this Trust, no Man need to doubt, who considers the Declaration with which our Saviour introduced their Commission ; and the general extensive Expressions of the Commission it self ; as the same is recorded in the several Evangelists collated. St. Matthew tells us, that after his Resurrection, he came unto his Disciples, and said unto them, *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth.* Matth. 28. 18. After asserting this ample extensive Power *given to him*, i. e. by his Father, he goes on according to St. John 20. 21. Peace be unto you : *as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you*, i. e. with ample and extensive Power, to do every Thing that may be proper and convenient for gathering, guiding and governing his Church, and continuing the Succession in their own Office ; as well as providing such and so many Assistants, or *Synergoi* with them, in *Orders*, or with Powers as various, as they should find Occasion for ; and to qualify them for such a Trust, breathes on them, and says *receive the Holy Ghost*, &c. And promiseth the Continuance of his gracious Assistance with them and their Successors, unto the End of the World.

This ample Power delivered thus generally, without particular Directions, must include a discretionary Power as to Modes and Particularities to be observed ; always to be consistent only, with the general Directions given, and such farther Instructions as might be given afterwards, from the same

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same Fountain : And such they were taught to expect, by the Promise he made them of such miraculous Inspirations, as were intended by their *receiving Power, after that the Holy Ghost was come upon them*, Acts i. 8. Under whose Direction, especially, if they had appointed standing Rules in the Church, touching Primacy, and Presidency in their own Office ; such Inequality as would necessarily arise therefrom, would not have been repugnant to any Part of their Commission or any Thing contained in it. Much less,

2. With Respect to other Officers, or Ministers in the Church, to whom this Commission was not immediately given by Christ : Can *Equality* among such with any Propriety be argued from this Commission ; although they may be said to be concerned in it, and have Power by it, as this Commission authorized the first Apostles to convey all the Powers unto others, to act in the Name of Christ, as his Officers, which the various Exigencies of the Church required ; and with Provision for perpetuating such Powers by regular Succession unto the End of the World.

Every Order and Degree of Ministry in all Ages how different soever in Power and Designation, may be said to be virtuated by this Commission, as by this the Powers were derived from Christ to his Apostles, to be conveyed by them to others, and so regularly handed down from Age to Age : But that the Commission immediately given to the Apostles, should properly and strictly, be the Commission given to any one besides those very Persons upon whom he breathed, and said, *Receive the Holy Ghost*, I can't see any Necessity to conclude. Nor can I see any Use of distinguishing between Commission and Designation to an Office, and Trust, when that is regularly made ; he that has Power and Authority given him to act in Behalf of GOD and Christ, may be said to have a Commission or Designation to such Trust, by whatever Means such Authority is given according to Christ's Direction ; and this Power being given to others from the Apostles by a solemn Ordination with Imposition of Hands, conveying such Powers as their Commission authorized them to give, such Ordination might as properly be called *Commission*

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mission as Designation ; and if the Apostles ordained, i. e. commissioned or designated some Persons to one Office or Trust, and some to another, as they found the Exigencies of the Church required ; the ample Powers in their Commission recorded, would well justify them in so doing ; but the several Persons so designated or authorized must receive their Power or Commission from such Ordination as was agreed upon by the Apostles, to be a regular conveying of Power, and Authority to act in such Affairs which such Ordination was well understood to qualify them for ; and not further.

When the Apostles ordained the seven *Deacons*, they said and did so many Things, doubtless, as were sufficient to distinguish that Ordination from the Ordination of *Presbyters*, although Imposition of Hands accompanied both, and might be the immediate Conveyance of the Power, which each received ; and this whole Dispute about Equality of Power among Ministers may easily be decided, by attending to the very plain Matters of Fact, recorded in the New-Testament, of different Orders and Degrees in the Ministry. For if all Ministers of Religion were not one and the same Order, all vested with equal Power, in the Apostles Days, when St. Paul and the rest of his Co-temporaries flourished in the Church, how absurd will it appear for any to conclude, that *one* Commission which Christ immediately gave to his Apostles, conveyed equal Powers to all other Ministers with them ? For if *Imparity* be plainly found in the Apostles Age, and under the Direction of their extraordinary Inspiration ; there can't be the least Face of a Reason, to infer Equality since, from the Nature of that Commission which was the *same* then as it is now.

That the *Deacons* were an Order inferior not only to the Apostles, but to other Ministers then in the Church, Mr. Hobart allows. Page 16. That they were appointed by the Apostles, an Order instituted for *some* Services in the Church, chosen and ordained, Mr. Hobart allows ; and although only seven are mentioned as ordained at the first Institution of that Order, yet more were added afterwards ; and *their Order*, distinct from and inferior to the *Presbyters*,

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as well as Apostles, was continued in the Church, and has been ever since reckoned an Order of the Clergy; and employed in other Services besides serving Tables, (as Mr. Hobart mistakes the Nature of their Office to be.)

At the first Appointment of this Order, the Apostles directed the Brethren to look out seven Men full of the Holy Ghost. And St. Stephen who was one of them, is said to be full of Faith and Power, and that he did great Wonders and Miracles among the People. Acts 6. 8. He disputed against the Synagogue of Libertines &c. Ver. 9. And they could not resist the Wisdom and Spirit by which he spake, ver. 10. He preached a long and excellent Sermon, Acts 7. Philip who was also one of the Seven, preached Christ unto them of Samaria, Acts 8. 5. He wrought Miracles and cast out unclean Spirits, ver. 6, 7. And baptized his Converts, ver. 12, 13: But Confirmation and giving the Holy Ghost by Imposition of Hands, was reserved to the highest Order. The Apostles sent Peter and John for this. Ver. 14, 15, &c. Here is a clear Account of one of the lowest Order, (but not so low as Mr. Hobart would make him) performing the sacred Offices of Religion, and in the same Chapter we are told of his preaching and baptizing, ver. 29, &c. Ver. 40. We find Deacons as well as Bishops mentioned in the Apostle's Salutation, Phil. 1. 1. And St. Paul instructs Timothy about the Qualifications for Deacons as well as Bishops, 1 Tim. 3. 8; Ignatius, one of the earliest Christian Writers, mentions Deacons as an Order of the Clergy, and Tertullian in the second Century, mentions the Deacons Power of baptizing with the Presbyters, as being both alike derived from the Bishop, and in Subordination to him. So that we are to look upon Deacons as Ministers in the Church, deriving their Institution from the Apostles, having their Power to preach and baptize in the Name of Christ, by Virtue of the Commission Christ gave to his Apostles, but never were thought equal Officers to the Apostles.

Marcus was allowed to be what Mr. Hobart means by a Minister properly so called. He is one of the Synergoi, with St. Paul in his Text; but the Imparity in this Instance I have already proved. And although Mr. Hobart

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Hart, by inferring Equality from the Word *Fellow-Labourers* in his Text, must be understood to say that *Marcus* and *Demas* &c. were equal to *St. Paul* and the rest of the Apostles ; and when he argues Equality among all Ministers, from their deriving Power from the Commission immediately given to the Apostles ; he must mean that all Ministers, must be equal with the Apostles, and that therefore the Apostles themselves could not be Prelates, i. e. as having any Authority or Jurisdiction over other Ministers of the Gospel, yet I can't believe that *Mr. Hart* himself, or any other Person of tolerable Sense will deny (upon cool Reflection) the *Imparity* in Office and Power, that subsisted between the Apostles and other Ministers ; I mean *Presbyters* as well as *Deacons*, so long as the Apostles themselves lived and presided in the Church.

I don't know of any that pretend to more Orthodoxy than Quakers, that have denied an Order of Elders or Presbyters superior to Deacons, and inferior to the Apostles, of whom Mention is so often made in the New-Testament, as well as by the very first Christian Writers and in all later Accounts of Christianity. So that I need say no more upon it, and will mention only two Texts in the Writings of *St. Paul* to put the Matter out of all Doubt, that in the first planting of Christianity, GOD himself established *Imparity* among the Ministers whom he sent to preach the Gospel of his Son ; and did not think it was necessary all his Ministers should have one Office, and one Work ; because one Commission to the Apostles, was esteemed sufficient to convey Power from GOD to every Order and every Individual in each Order to the End of Time ; as thereby a Succession might be provided, of such as were well authorized to give Power to as many in each Rank, or Degree of Order and Office, as the Churches Needs should require.

St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, GOD hath set in his Church first Apostles, secondly Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that *Helps, Governments*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. Then to declare their Inequality as much as Words can express, by an Interrogation

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terrogation implying Negation, he adds, ver. 29. *Are all Apostles ? Are all Prophets ? &c.* Meaning no, by no Means. The other Text I shall refer to is Eph. 4. 11. speaking of the Gifts bestowed by our Lord upon his Church at his Ascension, *And he gave, some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, &c.* I will leave this without a Comment, supposing the Imparity made by GOD himself at that Time to be very clear and evident ; and as such *Imparity* has always in Fact been found in the Church, in every Age, we must have better Arguments than such as Mr. *Hobart* has brought, to make any Man of Sense believe the Communion of a Church unsafe meerly because such an *Imparity* is found among her Ministers : Nay it should on the other Hand be rather thought dangerous to be of a Communion, without Prelacy, especially when all the ministerial Power they have, is claimed from a Commission never given by Christ to the Claimants themselves ; nor to any of so inferior a Rank as they value themselves upon, whether of the Laity or such Renegado Presbyters as threw off their Subjection to their Bishops, and invaded the sacred Office contrary to their Ordination-Vow and Promise, and Mr. *Hobart* says Oath too.

Now, as in all Governments, the Head must be the Fountain of Power ; what could derive from such whose highest Station was a State of professed Subjection ? And neither GOD nor Man had ever given them the Power of authorizing others, any farther than as Reason permits every Man to make a Representative or Attorney for himself ; but none for another Man, much less for GOD ; without a special Authority. So that there is Reason to be doubtful, whether after all their Solemnities, they have any more than Deputies from Men, who pretend to act with them in Things pertaining to GOD : And this Doubt must be increased from what Mr. *Hobart* says, Page 17, speaking of the Commission given to the Apostles, and in them constituting an Order of Prelates, to be continued by regular Succession, viz. Vicarious Ordination from them : Says Mr. *Hobart*, " They to whom it does not belong, are no Ministers of Christ, nor

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"nor do they derive any Authority from him." — I hope some that are serious and intelligent, will reflect upon this Passage, and consider how much depends upon *Mr. Hobart's* being in the Right, in this Argument ; in which I think I have sufficiently proved him mistaken.

If any one should think, he has either proved Presbyters equal to the Apostles, or at least that the Power of ordaining others to the Ministry, was committed to them in Equality ; and may therefore be claimed justly by those who are now called Presbyters, in Distinction from Bishops ; from what he says of *Paul and Barnabas and Timothy*, Page 18, 19. I answer in a few Words.

1. *Paul and Barnabas* were Ministers, before they came to *Antioch*, 'tis said, *Acts* 12. 25. *They had fulfilled their Ministry* ; and if they were now ordained again, it must be to a higher Order or Office than they had before ; but as this Supposition destroys his Notion of Parity, so the Power of ordinary Presbyters can't be inferred from the Acts of Prophets, done by special Direction of the Holy Ghost, as that Separation was said to be ; *Acts* 13. 1. This must be of the same Nature with Commissions given by GOD himself immediately, which would be as good as that given to the Eleven by Christ himself.

2. As to *Timothy's* Ordination, by the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery ; it will justify Ordinations performed by such a Presbytery, Men of the same Order and Authority in the Church, and no other, though called by the same Name. But this *Mr. Hobart* has not proved of any modern Presbyteries, nor can he prove it. If *St. Paul* presided in that Presbytery and laid his Hands upon *Timothy* at his Ordination, whoever the rest were that laid on Hands with him, it will make such a Presbytery, as *Mr. Hobart* can't find, unless he goes to a Bishop and his Presbyters, such as ordain in the Church of England : and there is good Reason to conclude,

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conclude, St. Paul was at the Head of that Presbytery ; for

1. St. Paul converted him to the Faith of Christ ; for this Reason calls him his own beloved Son, and expresses a particular Esteem and Affection for him. — 2 Tim. 1. 2.

2. We have frequent Mention of his following St. Paul in his Travels and being an Attendant on him ; on which Accounts it would have seemed very probable that he should receive Ordination from him rather than from others, especially Inferiors.

3. His Epistles wrote to him, as Instructions and Directions touching his Office, add to the Probability, but his putting him in Mind 2 Tim. 1. 6. to *stir up the Gift of GOD in him* ; and expressing it to be by putting on *his, St. Paul's Hands*, puts it beyond Probability, for in 1 Tim. 4. 14. the same Gift in him, is mentioned to be by Prophecy, with laying on the Hands of the Presbytery : If it be objected, that 'tis possible these Gifts may be different, and not intend the same Thing : I answer, such a Possibility don't affect me ; I am only concerned to answer Mr. Hobart's Argument, which will make nothing for his Purpose, if he can't be sure that Timothy was ordained by a Number of Fellow-Labourers, of no higher Order, nor vested with any more Authority, than Mr. Hobart's Fellow-Labourers at Stanford, which I suppose it absolutely impossible for him to do ; and at least a very great Probability, if not a Certainty may be urged against him, from what I have mentioned above, and also the universal Practice of the Church, which took Place every where from the Apostles Times ; to have all Ordinations performed by an Order superior to mere Presbyters.

Mr. Hobart's great Effort being to seem to demolish the whole ministerial Powers of such Presbyters, as the Congregations in Communion of the Church of England are under the immediate Care of, and advance his Fellow-Labourers

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Labourers to all the spiritual Power of Bishops ; after having put his own best Claim to any Power at all, as derived from some perfidious Presbyters of the Church. Page 19. *Margin.* Very good then ! Proceeds to offer something with no Design, at least to his Purpose, if it be not to *seem to prove*, that the Priests of the Church, have no Power to do any Thing as Ministers of Christ. Page 21, 22, 23.

1. Because they don't receive Power *by their Ordination*, so much as to preach, which is a necessary Part of the ministerial Commission. Page 21.

Answer. He is too trifling to deserve a serious Answer, but something will be expected to satisfy such as may be puzzled with his Trifling and Falshood. He should have consulted the Office for ordaining Presbyters (in every Folio Common-Prayer-Book) and known by that, the Power given to Priests by their Ordination ; which perhaps might have saved him the Shame and Reproach, which such glaring *Falshood* and *Prevarication* must expose him to. When People are invited only to read the Form and Manner of ordaining Priests ; which any Person that is curious to be satisfied concerning Mr. *Hobart's* Veracity, may find Opportunity for in every Church where a Folio Common-Prayer-Book is lodged, in which also are the Canons of the Church, most wickedly falsify'd by Mr. *Hobart* ; and it will not excuse him to say, he writes after another as wicked and false as himself : I charge him boldly with gross Prevarication and Falshood ; done with a wicked Intent, to asperse the Constitution of the Nation which deserves the highest Esteem and Reverence : 'Tis easy for any one to discover whether I do him Injustice by this Charge. And I wish them to read Mr. *Hobart's* whole Page 21. Then the Form of ordaining Priests, in which are many Passages to prove this Falshood, I will here mention but three.

In the Bishop's Charge are these Words, " Now again
" we exhort you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that

“ that you have in Remembrance into how high a
“ Dignity, and to how weighty an Office and Charge
“ ye are called : That is to say, to be Mes-
“ sengers, Watchmen and Stewards of the Lord ; to
“ *teach* and to premonish, to feed and provide for the
“ Lord's Family ; to seek for Christ's Sheep that are
“ dispersed, and for his Children who are in the midst
“ of this naughty World, that they may be saved through
“ Christ for ever.” One of the Interrogatories is, “ Will
“ you then give your faithful Diligence always so to
“ minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Disci-
“ pline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as
“ this Church and Realm hath received the same, ac-
“ cording to the Commandments of GOD ; so that you
“ may teach the People committed to your Care and
“ Charge with all Diligence to keep and observe the
“ same ?”

When the Bishop and Priests lay on Hands, the Bi-
shop says, “ Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and
“ Work of a Priest in the Church of GOD, now com-
“ mitted unto thee by the Imposition of our Hands.
“ Whose Sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven ; and
“ whose Sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And
“ be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of GOD,
“ and of his holy Sacraments ; &c. *The Bishop deliver-*
“ *ing the Bible into his Hands*, says, “ Take thou Autho-
“ rity to preach the Word of GOD, and to minister the
“ Holy Sacraments in the Congregation, where thou shalt
“ be lawfully appointed thereunto.

Who can believe now, that our Ordination is not design-
ed actually to give us Power to preach, administer Sa-
craments, and exercise Discipline ; yet this Mr. *Hobart*
flatly denies : And says this Power we receive by the
Bishop's License, which is not given to all that are or-
dained.

He says “ the Canons of the Church of *England* allow
“ a Bishop to ordain *any Person*, if he has a Presentation
“ to a Living, understands Latin, and is not scandalous.”
He

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He puts at the Bottom of Page 21. Canon 34 cited by Mr. *Pierce*. How far these Men will deserve to have their Words taken in any plain Matter of Fact hereafter, judge every one that reads the Canon referred to, in which are these Words, "No Bishop shall henceforth admit any Person, &c. — desiring to be a Deacon, unless twenty-three Years old, and to be a Priest twenty-four Years compleat, and hath taken some Degree of School in either of the said Universities, or at the least, except he be able to *yield an Account of his Faith*, in Latin, according to the Articles of Religion approved &c — and to *confirm the same* by sufficient Testimonies out of the holy Scriptures, &c. Canon 35. *The Bishop before he admit any Person to holy Orders shall diligently examine him in the Presence of those Ministers that shall assist him, &c.* — The Form of ordaining Priests will shew further what Qualifications are necessary : In which Point the Rules of our Church are excellent, and can't be parallel'd by any of the Sectaries.

2. In Pursuit of the same Design, to beget an Opinion in his Readers that our Presbyters have no Power from Christ to act as Ministers of the Gospel, Mr. *Hobart* further adds, Page 22. "In Order to a Person's obtaining this Ordination and License to preach the Gospel, he must (among other Things) take an Oath of *Canonical Obedience* to his Bishop." This he endeavours to prove unlawful ; because contrary to those Precepts of our Lord, Matth. 23. 8, 9, 10, *Be not ye called Rabbi, &c. and call no Man your Father upon Earth, &c.* — Neither be ye called Masters ; for one is your Master, even Christ. And our profest Submission to the Bishops, he calls "such a servile Subjection to others as Christ has forbidden." Page 25. But by his Leave, who authorized him to be thus dogmatical in putting his Construction upon those Words of our Saviour ; with such an indecent Reflection upon the Wisdom and Piety not only of the Bishops and all the Clergy of *England*, but the whole Legislature at this Time, and ever since the Reformation ; if those Words of our Saviour are to be understood literally, every common Man may know what they import ; and the

Quakers

Quakers have a better Plea for denying all Titles that infer Superiority and Dignity to *any Man*, than Mr. Hobart to restrain the Prohibition only to Episcopal Preheminence: A Rebuke for his Insolence is the properest Answer to be given him, since his Way of Reasoning from those Prohibitions of our Saviour, would deny all ecclesiastical Power and Jurisdiction, as well as episcopal Preheminence: If there be any Power and Authority in any Order whatsoever in the Church, to which Men ought to be subject and pay Obedience, it can not be a Fault to own that Authority, and promise and engage most solemnly and faithfully to be subject to it. Professing Subjection, or swearing solemnly to yield due Obedience to lawful Superiors is not the Thing prohibited by our Saviour, nor does he intend to prohibit all Superiority in Place or Office; for 'tis plain, that he gave Power and Authority ecclesiastical and spiritual unto his Apostles; and Christians are commanded to *obey them that have the Rule over them*, i. e. Ecclesiastical Rulers, Egoumenois, Governors; Heb. 13. 17. and *submit themselves*, and if Submission be a Duty, to give Assurance of yielding it, when reasonably demanded is no base *Servility*. Mr. Hobart might have found a better Interpretation of St. Matthew 23. 8. in Dr. Whitby, whom he cites upon another Occasion, and thither I must refer you and him, for the Sense of those Prohibitions; which only forbid ascribing to Men what is peculiar to GOD and CHRIST.

3. One Fling more he has at our Presbyters, Page 23. "Well, after all this Submission, &c. — What ministerial Authority is the Person vested with? He is allowed to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments: But for the other two Branches of ministerial Authority, Government and Ordination, equally instituted by Christ, and necessary to answer the Designs of redeeming Grace, he has neither Part nor Lot in these Matters." With Reference to which Defects, as he would have them believed, he says, Page 25. "My Friends, Is it really so desirable a Thing to you to have Churches so defective as to be utterly unable to exercise the Discipline Christ has instituted, and Ministers who have not half the Powers

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“ Powers contained in the Commission given to the Gospel-Ministry, &c.

Ans. If Mr. Hobart would have been all of a Piece, he should have said *Ministers* without *any Power at all from Christ*, because not invested with all in the Commission given to the Apostles; because he had before said, that the Commission being one for all Ministers, He that has any Part must have all, so that if he allows to our Ministers *half*, by his own Reasoning, they must in fact have enough, i. e. in Reality *all*, notwithstanding all the Limitations and Restrictions that *Laws* and *Canons* can make about it; but as we are agreed thus far; that the Commission given to the Apostles was full and ample enough to provide for all the Exigencies of the Church in every Age, and have it furnished with Officers succeeding the Apostles in their Power to govern the Church and all Orders in it, and to ordain Pastors for the Flock of Christ to *teach*, administer the Sacraments, and dispense the Ordinances and Discipline of Christ, for the Benefit of all his Children; we may think our selves pretty well provided for in the Church of *England* with twenty six Bishops vested with all the Power the Apostles had; for then, they can ordain as many Presbyters and Deacons as the Exigencies of the Church require, and give them the same Powers that the Apostles gave the Elders they ordained in every Church, and the Deacons they ordained to be their Attendants and Fellow Labourers: and if any Person will take Pains to consult the Form for ordaining Priests, in our *Large Common Prayer Books*, he will find a Commission large enough given to such Ministers as have the Care of the *American Congregations*, to enable them in GOD's Name, and in Behalf of CHRIST, to do every Thing that Men's comfortable Hopes and Happiness require to be done; although they act in Subordination, and are obliged to pay a proper Reverence to their Superiors the *Bishops*.

A *Chiefly*, by our Constitution, is reserved to the Bishops as it always was in the Church of Christ, and to this belongs properly the Right of giving Power by Ordination, and presiding in Jurisdiction; but the Presbyters subordinate

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ordinate to them have as much Power in the Government of their several Flocks as Wisdom and Prudence can think proper to intrust them with ; Nay, we can say, even as *Jerom* to *Evagrius*, *Quid facit Episcopus, quod Presbyter non faciat, excepta Ordinatione.*

What fuller Authority in the Exercise of Discipline would any desire a Minister to be invested with, than is contained in those Words of the Bishop when he lays on Hands in Ordination saying, “ Receive the *Holy Ghost*, “ (the *Gift* ; as Offices are called *Eph.* 4. 11.) for the “ Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of GOD now “ committed to thee, &c. — Whose Sins thou dost forgive, “ they are forgiven, and whose Sins thou dost retain, they “ are retained,” &c.

Mr. *Hobart* says “ Government and Ordination, are two “ Branches of Ministerial Authority equally instituted by “ Christ, and necessary to answer the Designs of Redeeming Grace : if he means that the Power of Ordination should be committed to every Minister is necessary ; I can by no means agree with him ; I allow it to be necessary that such a Power should be properly placed in such Persons as may be able to furnish the Church with Officers to act in the Name of Christ ; but no more necessary that every Minister should have Power in the Church to ordain Ministers, than that every Justice of Peace in the Common Wealth should have Power to make Justices of Peace. So, Government is necessary, but no more necessary in the Church to have every Minister vested with the highest and chief Power, than in the State to have every Justice of Peace, vested with Power to determine Titles of Land, and give final Judgment in Causes Capital, which would be to have Judges of Assize and Oyer and Terminer in every Parish, which Privilege, I believe few People would be fond of. Nor have they Reason any more to be fond of Mr. *Hobart*’s Scheme for Ecclesiastical chief Judges, many of whom have not Capacity to decide a Controversy of thirteen-pence half penny.

As for the Rubrick directing a Minister to suspend one
against

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against whom Immorality is objected, and notify the Ordinary in 14 Days, I would only say, it can't be thought a Law to oblige, when such Notifying is impracticable in that Space.

GOD's own Positive Institutions are always to be interpreted so as to give Place to the Law of *Necessity*, and so our Saviour expounds the Law of the Sabbath: and for the same Reason humane Ordinances must be so interpreted likewise; and if this limited Time being impracticable to be complied with, and the Design of referring the Cause for the hearing of Judges appointed, not taking Place; Reason will easily suggest, that such Affairs are left with the Minister to determine according to his best Prudence, with the Authority belonging to his Office, which in such Case is not restricted by that Rubrick; and has only to expect that his Doings may be referred to his Bishop; unto whose Judgment he must submit, as well as the Party complaining, when Time will give leave to obtain it. — And now I have done with his Objections from the Defects of our Constitution.

2. The Unlawfulness of joining in Communion with the Church of *England* in *Connecticut*, he argues from the awful Guilt of Schism thereby contracted, disturbing the Peace of the Church and “renting not the Coat, but the Body of Christ:” This is awful Guilt indeed; and if I could think these Things done by conforming to the Church of *England*, I should perswade every Body to keep to their Conventicles of whatever Denomination; But as Mr. *Hobart* has contented himself to say these things only, without any Shew of Argumentation to prove them; A bare Denial of them might be esteemed sufficient for my Purpose: and yet I will offer a few Words to assist the Judgment of such as desire to be satisfied about the Justness of this Objection:

1. Then, I will allow that making Divisions in, and Separations from, regular Christian Societies, with which we are obliged to join in Christian Fellowship and Communion, is Schism, and very Criminal in the Sight of GOD; and never to be justified or excused before Man. —

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2. I will allow that Divisions may be in Fact made, in such Communities which Men leave, when they go into the Communion of the Church of *England* in *Connecticut*; These Societies, which they call Churches may be Rent and divided by the withdrawing of some of their Members.

3. I hope Mr. *Hobart* will allow that lawful and justifiable Separations contract no Guilt of Schism, much less such as doing Men's Duty to GOD makes necessary. —

4. It will lie upon Mr. *Hobart* to prove their Societies to be regularly constituted Churches of Christ, before the Guilt of rending the Body of Christ can be fixed upon Separators from them; this will prove a very hard Task; but he must go through it before his Charge of Schism will lie against any Sort of Separators from them. And then

5. Considering the Respect which common Sense will teach any Man is due to the Church of *England* Communion, as tis the National Establishment, the Religion of our Mother Country, and the Nation whose King, is the King of *Connecticut*; it would be proper for Mr. *Hobart* to shew how positive and full the Law is whether of GOD or Man, to oblige People so to adhere to their Societies of one Kind or another, as not to become of the Communion of the Church of *England* when ever GOD's Providence gives them Opportunity.

6. If the Congregations, forsaking which, is called Schism, are themselves founded in Schism, and unjustifiable Separation from the Communion of the Church of *England*; or in their present Constitution must necessarily be esteemed Abettors and Approvers of Schism, Disorders, Usurpation, Contempt of the chief Authority Christ has left in his Church; or any such like Crimes; Then such Congregations whatever they may call themselves, and whatever Shew they may make of Piety and Devotion in their own Ways, ought to be esteemed in respect of the Mystical Body of Christ only as Excrescences or Tumors in the Body natural, or perhaps as *Fungosities* in an ulcerated Tumor, the eating away of which, by whatever Means tends
not

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not to the Hurt, but to the Soundness and Health of the Body.

The Method I proposed in the Beginning of this Letter, will make the Consideration of some Particulars properly fall under my third Head of Discourse, which may help to form a Judgment upon the Charge of *Schism*, which Mr. *Hobart* objects against those who leave their Congregations and conform to the Church of *England*, and therefore I refer to that Place what might otherways have been properly offered here.

II. I now proceed to take Notice of his Objections that may be considered as drawn from the Inexpediency of conforming to the Church of *England*; If Persons of Sobriety and Religion, who are desirous that the Church of Christ should be kept pure &c, should forsake their Assemblies and go over to the Communion of the Church of *England* Mr. *Hobart* expostulates with them Page 26. "Can you answer
" it to GOD or your own Consciences, to the present Age or
" to Posterity, if you should be Instrumental in destroying
" an Ecclesiastical Constitution so exactly agreeable to the
" Gospel; and which has been so signally owned and
" blessed for promoting Religion in the Power and Prac-
" tice of it; and in introducing, instead of it, so de-
" fective a Constitution, and which will almost certainly
" bring in with it an Inundation of Vice and Looseness;
" and Issue in the Destruction of practical Religion"? I design here to consider only what he has said in Relation to the Inundation of Vice, Looseness, Prophaness and Immorality mentioned in the above Passage, and much more with great Confidence in the same Page: confirmed by his own Observations in his Travels through half the Plantations in *North-America*, and what he has heard of the Islands: How good and regular their Constitution is has had some Consideration, and shall have more under the next Head, — I am willing here to suppose the Matter doubtful, whether it be very good or no; Nay I would suppose it not so good as it should be in Point of Regularity; sprung up in Disorder, and needing something to recommend it besides its Agreement with the Gospel; and the Countenance it
may

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may pretend to have of any humane Laws : This may seem to be, according to Mr. *Hobart*, a particular Aptness in their Constitution to promote Virtue and Piety : so that although some Objections might be laid against the Manner of their erecting and Regularity of their Constitution in some Points, yet if it has an Aptness in any peculiar Manner, to promote real Goodness, and save a Nation from an Inundation of Vice, or preserve a Country from growing Immorality and Profaness ; it might claim an Approbation ; at least as a necessary Expedient to preserve the Country from Wickedness and Ruin, which must unavoidably come in like a Flood, if the national Establishment should prevail, and Mr. *Hobart* is to be believed.

I only therefore propose to consider under this Head, whether so much as Inexpediency may be argued against conforming to the Church of *England*, on Account of what Mr. *Hobart* suggests of *almost* Certainty of an Inundation of Vice and Immorality ; and Destruction of practical Religion that will attend the introducing of the Church of *England* : Which Suggestion is a wicked Calumny proceeding from that Bigotry and Self-Admiration which the Zealots, among every Sort of *Enthusiastick Sectaries*, are remarkably tinged with. Some Effects of the *New-Light* Heat Mr. *Hobart* condemns, but discovers the same rash censorious Temper against those whom he disapproves ; and Pharisee-like, pleases himself with Comparisons between his own Sect and all others, and overlooking their own Hypocrisy and detestable Vices, passes severe Censures upon others Faults ; like him who said, *GOD I thank thee I am not as other Men*, &c, and yet farther from Justification than him whom he despised. Luke 18. 14.

Every new Sect pretends a Necessity of separating from the impure Mass of Mankind, and have the Vanity to think themselves the only Saints, and Darlings of Heaven : And commonly they seduce well-meaning People into their Snares by Appearances of Piety, and Pretences to a more strict Virtue than other People, upon whose Faults and Failings they are very sharp-sighted ; and take Pains to exaggerate in such Instances as they have no great Temptation to be like them.

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them in, or find their Account in differing from ; although taking their whole Practice together, they may have Faults greater, and Vices more abominable. Whoever is acquainted with the Rise and Progress of the several Sects in our own Nation, must know they have all been Refiners ; and yet turned out more and more impure.

The *Brownists* and *Independents* refined upon the Puritanical Presbyterians, the Baptists and Quakers upon them, and the self-admiring Saints of *New-England*, have been refined upon, by their own *Tennent* and *Davenport*, &c. with their New-Light Exhorters, who by their inward Light have seen the whole Country lying in such a State of Carnality, Sin and Death, that Hell has been ready to swallow them all up, Ministers and People except those few here and there, whom they could fright into the Convulsions of Conversion, and drive as far from Reason and common Sense as themselves.

Mr. *Hobart* proposes a Comparison to be made between *New-England*, and some of the *Islands* where no Teachers have been but Ministers of the Church of *England* ; but suppose we should find some such Places more addicted to Cursing and Swearing and Intemperance, than *Connecticut*, and less careful to observe the Sabbath ; which Vices I would by no Means extenuate or excuse, perhaps some Virtues may be found there also, not so conspicuous in *New-England* ; and when the Vices and Virtues of both Parties are to be exactly weighed, who shall hold the Ballance ? However if it could well be done, a Comparison to decide this Controversy, would much more properly be made between the State of Religion and Virtue in the whole Nation of *England*, before any of these refining Sects opened their refining Shops in the Kingdom ; and the State of Religion and Virtue at present ; and as it has been gradually improving to better or worse ever since. And then, we may make some reasonable Conjecture, of the Influence of those Principles and Practices, Mr. *Hobart* so much admires, towards making a Nation or Country more or less virtuous, or vicious.

of the Church of England, &c. 33

The People of *England* were a very religious and pious People, before any Independents or Presbyterians opened Meeting-Houses in *England*, this is well known to all that are acquainted with our History and the Genius of the Nation in those Days. And there are remaining to this Day *Monuments* of the Virtue, Piety and practical Godliness of our Forefathers, in the Endowments of Churches, Hospitals, Colleges and Charity Schools, and many other Instances that our despising Neighbours can't pretend to vie with; and notwithstanding the large Strides that Vice, Irreligion, Atheism and Profaneness have made in their Advances, since the Phanatick Phrenzy opened the Sluce of Impiety and Wickedness, and demolished all the Hedges about Religion and Virtue, when they overturned the Constitution of the Nation, pulled down Monarchy in the State, and Prelacy in the Church, Yet vital Piety and Religion fruitful in solid Virtue and substantial Goodness is yet to be found in the Church of *England*, in a Degree not to be parallel'd by any of her boasting Enemies. The printed Sermons and Discourses of our Divines are sufficient Monuments of their laudable Endeavours to put a Stop to the Flood of Atheism and Immorality that has been flowing in upon us, the Progress of which, although it ought to be lamented, is not owing to the Tendency of any Doctrine, taught by our Church; or any Faults in the Constitution of the Church of *England*: But to the Disorders and Confusions introduced by a Variety of Sectaries, all weakening the Churches Discipline, and with much Zeal propagating Notions and Opinions naturally destructive of Vertue, and reproachful to Christianity; thus by *seeming* very zealous for Godliness, in a Way of Strife, Disorder and Confusion, and declaiming against Morality, and Self-Righteousness, and other Methods which I care not to mention, we have seen Christianity exposed to the Contempt of Infidels, and careless Living and Vice encouraged by Methods pretending to advance the Glory of sovereign Grace:

If Mr. *Hobart* had well understood, the true Causes and Springs from which the Immorality, Atheism and Profaneness of the present Age is derived, he could never have imputed it to any Defects in the Constitution of the Church of *England*: in his Discourse there is *Fallacia non Cause pro causa*,

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causa, The Fault he might have found at Home, which in vain he seeks abroad. And as the late scandalous Efforts of fanatick Zeal so disreputable to Christian Religion, and well known to have a direct Tendency to Profaneness and impure Living, were an Improvement upon the Doctrines commonly received in this Country, and might have made a much greater Progress, if the Obstructions and Checks it met with from the Church of *England* Congregations had been out of the Way, (altho' it must be confessed to the Honour of many not of the Church of *England* Communion, that they shewed a becoming Discountenance to those Disorders, and did their utmost to suppress them.) So, what might be universally observed of the Temper and Tendency of the Church of *England* Principles with Reference to this Flood of Impiety, Profaneness and Licentiousness, the Country was in Danger of being over-run by, may convince every considerate unprejudic'd Person, that the Danger Mr. *Hobart* would alarm People with, of Vice and Wickedness coming in among them by Means of the Church of *England*, is a mere Scare-Crow, and has no Foundation in Reason; but if the Constitution of it be well considered, it will be easy to see that substituting *that*, in the Room of whatever may now be said to prevail in the Country, would be the introducing Order, Peace, Purity and Happiness; and not any Thing that would be dishonourable to GOD, or hurtful to the Country.

I have only now to take Notice of what may be considered

III. As Objections against the Necessity of going over to the Communion of the Church of *England* in Point of Duty. Those that propagate the Church of *England* in *Connecticut*, would not put themselves to so many Difficulties, and take so much Pains, if they did not believe the Glory of GOD the Welfare of many Souls, were to be promoted thereby, nor should we endeavour to proselyte *some*, if we did not believe it the Duty and Interest of *all* to become Profelytes. And that it would be every Way, for the Benefit and Advantage of the Country, for the present Age, and for Posterity, to have all Parties and Sects laid aside, and the national Constitution submitted to, by all the Colonies depending on the

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the Crown of *England*, and to be esteemed as Parts of the *English* Nation ; which is the *English* Church, or Church of *England*.

The visible catholic Church of Christ, or Christian Church militant, as making one Body *visible*, of which Christ is the Head ; may be considered with Respect to its Parts either *Heterogeneous* or *Homogeneous*.

The *Heterogeneous* Parts, are the various Orders of Clergy and Laity of which the Church is composed ; and might all be conceived to belong to the Church in *Jerusalem*, if the Constitution of the Church had been perfectly compleated, before it extended its Limits beyond that large City. The Apostles as Colleagues vested with all the Powers in the Commission, Matth. 28. 19. might chuse St. *James* or any other of their Number, to be their President, and make such Rules or Canons as they might think proper, especially by Direction of the Holy Ghost, for regulating the Methods each should pursue, for Preservation of Unity and Order, in the Execution of the Authority each was invested with, by that Commission, to *make Disciples, baptize, &c.* They might agree and determine, what Assistants should be employed in this Work, and what Manner of Ordination they should have, and what Powers given by such Ordinations ; and may be conceived at least, to have not only filled the Place of *Judas* in their own Order, but to have ordained Presbyters, and Deacons, and appointed each their Trust and Duty ; and with about 5000 Converts to Christianity, as the Laity joined to them, and continuing in their Doctrine, and Fellowship ; we may conceive this to be then the *visible* Catholic Christian Church ; the Parts of different Names and Use, the *Apostles, Elders and Deacons* for clerical Offices, and the *Laity* according to their several Stations.—And according to such a Model, under the Presidency of some of the Apostolical Order, when People of other Nations embraced the Faith of Christ, the Church might extend its Limits ; and as many Societies as should be thus formed in different Places, might be called Parts or Members of the one Church.

The

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The *Homologous* Parts therefore, are such Members of the Catholick Church in any Parts of the World, formed according to the Apostolical Model ; who may be said to be in *their* Doctrine and Fellowship ; having at least one *Apostle*, or a *Successor to the Apostles*, in the Fulness of Power given *them* by our Lord's Commission, to preside in Jurisdiction and Ordination. Such Churches are true Parts of the Catholick Church, whether consisting of many or fewer Christians, and may be united into one, although gathered out of several Nations ; if not interfering with the Orders and Rules of the Church Catholick ; and may be Churches in such and such Nations, although those Nations may not be christian. But when any Nation becomes Christian, i. e. by any authentick, national Act establisheth Christianity for the Religion of such Nation, and receives such a Model of the Church of Christ as was settled by the Apostles, that makes a *national Church* ; the Largeness of which may require many of the superior Order of Officers or Successors to the Apostles, to answer the Ends of Government and Ordination, and therefore although those by Office are equal, the Preservation of Order in the Church will require Rules for Precedency ; hence we find early in the Church *Metropolitans, Primates, Arch-Bishops*, as well as among the inferior Orders, Arch-Presbyters, Arch-Deacons, Deans, Prebends and Canons. And such is the Nation of *England*, first a Civil Society Independent ; having a Right to govern it self, and make Laws to regulate its own most important Affairs, without being liable to the Controul of any Power upon Earth ; then adopting Christianity into their Constitution, and by authentick Laws making it the Religion of the *English* Nation, providing for the Support and Dignity of Bishops, and the Maintenance of the inferior Clergy, and for the decent Performance of the Christian Worship ; and thus become a Christian Church, the *Church of England* : Which is the same as the Nation of *England* become Christian, and a true Part or Member of the one Catholick Church.

Such a Church united into one and regularly formed as a Member of the Catholick Church may also be divided into Parts of the same Name, thus *Metropolitical* and *Diocæsan* Churches may be Members of a National Church, and *Parochial*

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rochial Churches may be Parts of a *Diocesan*; by having a common Government and regular Subordination they are united in one, how many Parts soever; and by whatever Means distinguished; but even a Parochial Church or single Congregation, if it belongs to the Catholick Church of Christ as a true Member thereof, must have its Clergy ordained by and in Subordination to, such Officer or Officers in the Church as have derived their Power of Presidency and Ordination from the Apostles, as Successors to them in the Power with which they were invested by our Lord himself. And this may be said of all the Congregations in Communion with the Church of *England*; our Clergy are ordained by Bishops, who regularly succeed the Apostles in the Power of Jurisdiction and Ordination, have a decent Regularity established by the Legislature of the Nation, as Governors combined in one national Church, and common Rules and Laws properly enacted, to which the Members of every Congregation are subject; and thus make one Church.

Our Constitution has been so often proved truly primitive and apostolical, i. e. agreeing well with the apostolical Practice and Rules; and the Practice of the Primitive Church, that I will suppose nothing needs to be added here upon this Head: Especially considering what I have said already in Answer to Mr. *Hobart's* Objections against the different Orders in our Church. And if we may suppose the Constitution of our national Church to be regular and good, our Prelates, Successors to the Apostles in their Power of Ordination and Jurisdiction; and this Church continuing stedfast in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, (which I hope may be said truly as well as boldly) it may surely be urged upon every Man, that is *English*, that belongs to this Nation, and is properly a Part of it, in whatever Corner he may live, that his Duty obliges him to be of the Communion of the Church of *England*: And not to make Profession of any Sort of Religion that is opposite thereto. If it be every Man's indispensable Duty to be a *Christian*, the same Duty will oblige him to be and continue a Member of the Church of Christ which is his Body, to preserve and maintain the Peace, Order and Unity of the Body, and especially that Part

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Part to which he particularly belongs ; which will infer the Duty of reverencing and submitting to the Officers regularly presiding and governing in such Church ; which being the Bishops of the Church of *England* in chief, every one that makes a Part of this Nation, owe Reverence and Submission to them, under Christ, and may esteem our Saviour's Words to his Apostles applicable to such Prelates ; *He that despiseth you, despiseth me, &c.*

Their Authority as the Apostles Successors, gives Virtue and Influence to the Powers of Presbyters and Deacons, to transact with Men in the Name of Christ, whatsoever they are intrusted to perform in reconciling Sinners to GOD, and applying the Seals of the Covenant of Grace. The Neglect, Contempt and Disobedience shew'd to these, is therefore a very great Breach of Duty, these are such as the Apostle commands Christians to obey and submit to, Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit yourselves ; for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give Account that they may do it with Joy and not with Grief ; for that is unprofitable for you.* The Greek Word here rendered *them that have the Rule over you*, signifies *Governors*, such as Prelates are in the Church : There are many Texts in the New-Testament, forbidding Divisions, requiring the Preservation of Unity, Peace and Order, and Submission to Government, that might be alledged as clear Proofs upon this Head ; and the Pleas from *Toleration* or *Charter* can't evade their Force, but I will rather proceed to answer what may appear to be an Objection against the Necessity of conforming to the Church of *England* in *Connecticut*, as contained in Mr. *Hobart's* Discourse, and that is, that by joining in Communion with the Church of *England*,

1. They forsake the Communion of regularly instituted and well-governed Churches of Christ, P. 25. And become “ Instrumental in destroying an ecclesiastical Constitution so “ exactly agreeable to the Gospel.” — Now if he had proved as well as said, that the Congregations in *Connecticut* are a Communion of regularly instituted and well-governed Churches, that have a Constitution ecclesiastical exactly agreeable to the Gospel ; it would have been very much to the Purpose,

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Purpose, and indeed no Pleas without this can be of any Force, to take off the Necessity I have been urging ; and if what he depends upon to support this Pretence proves a Mistake, the Necessity lying upon every Man to conform to the Church, will revolve in full Strength ; and must be urged forceably, upon all Orders of Men among them, Rulers and People.

Without a Clergy regularly authorized to minister in the Church of GOD, he will not pretend an ecclesiastical Constitution agreeable to the Gospel. What Countenance he pleads to their Manner of ordaining from the Ordination of *Paul* and *Barnabas* and *Timothy*, I have already considered, as also his Plea, that Christ's Commission to his Apostles, was a Commission to every Minister, and therefore conveyed the Right of *ordaining* to every Minister, as well as all other Powers given by that Commission, Matth. 28. 19. unto the Apostles ; the Absurdity of this Supposition I have also considered and refuted, and seeing he confesseth Page 17. " All " to whom this *Commission* belongs have full and equal Right " to use all the Power and Authority contained in it, and " they to whom it does not belong, are no Ministers of " Christ, nor do they derive any Authority from him." I assume, this Commission belongs not to their Ministers, i. e. as a Commission given by Christ to any of them, much less all and every Sort of them, he makes the Conclusion himself, which I hope will be attended to, more seriously as coming from him. And their Confidence must abate, in Proportion to the Uncertainty of their Plea, that the *Apostles* Commission is *their* Commission to act in the Name of Christ.

It ought to be considered that this Opinion is contrary to the Sense of all Christians that own an *Inequality* of Order, and therefore all the famous and noted Churches from the Apostles Days ; and if true, denies any Superiority in the *Apostles themselves* over the *Elders* they ordained in every City ; which I am persuaded few Men of Sense, upon cool Reflection, will give into.

Besides, if this Commission had been intended for all Ministers

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nisters of Christ, don't Reason tell us, that Rules and Methods for designating Ministers would have been necessary, and Compliance with such Methods and Rules a Qualification, for enjoying Christ's Commission. And can we think the Churches Rules and Laws have no Force in such Cases?

If Imposition of *commissionated* Hands is necessary, this alone will be sufficient to shew the utmost Irregularity and Confusion in the *Connecticut* Constitution, which having allowed Lay-Ordination, in the Instances of Messrs *Eliot* at *Guilford*, *Buckingham* at *Sea-Brook*, *Chauncy* at *Stratford*, and how many more I know not; from whom the present Sett of Ministers derive their Ordination, at least many of them; whom Mr. *Hobart's* Conclusion discards from any Pretence of Authority from Christ. And for my Part, I don't believe the rest subsist upon any better Foundation; because such Ordainers, receive no Power from, by or under, the Commission given to the Apostles, for the Work of ordaining, and were guilty of Usurpation, and Disobedience to the lawful Authority of the Church, in pretending to it.

The *awful Guilt of Schism*, as Mr. *Hobart* justly calls it, was contracted by those who began the Separation in *England*, renounced the Authority of their Governors, and invited discontented People to join in their Disobedience; to despise their lawful and faithful Guides, and set up Parties against them, in Defiance of the Laws both of Church and State, and after the Guilt contracted by such Disobedience and schismatical Separations, what Influence could crossing the Waters have, to purge these Crimes? or justify the same disobedient Tempers, and unlawful Practices, in a new Country dependent on, and a Part of the Nation of *England*? Nor have these Principles or dividing Practices grown more innocent by long Continuance, a Spirit of Contempt and Disobedience has been propagated with great Industry, against the lawful Governors of the Church; to prevent, if possible, the Generations yet unborn, from returning to the Unity of Christ's Church; this Mr. *Hobart's* Sermon is an Instance and Proof of. And if the Separation be kept on Foot unjustifiably in *Old-England*, these in *New-England* draw their

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their Guilt upon themselves ; not only by acting upon their Principles ; but justifying their Contempt and Disobedience, by denying and disputing against all Episcopal Power, superior to that of Presbyters, and refusing the Communion of those that submit to such a Power most regularly established. And now pursuant to their own Practice against the Church, the New-Lights are paying them in their own Coin by the Separations they are carrying on.

2. He would have People think they rather act against their Duty in conforming to the Church of *England*, because they have been baptized and educated in their Churches.

This needs but little Answer ; for such an Argument would have the same Force in Behalf of the most corrupt Religion, and against the most necessary Duty, if Men must think themselves obliged to abide by the Choice of their Parents in their Behalf, when they come to be able to discover their Errors. And as to what he says, of the wicked Practice of learning such Children the Church Catechism ; I will only say, it might be more proper to begin with the Creed, or else to ask the Children that have had such Baptism, *What Answer do the Children of the Church give ?* when asked, *Who gave you that Name ?* And when asked, *What did your God-Fathers, &c.**

3. The last Thing I observe that has any Appearance of an Objection against the Necessity of conforming to the Church is Page 26. that *their* Constitution “ has been signally owned “ and blessed for promoting Religion in the Power and Practice of it.”

* Such Children would be thus put in Mind, that something more is done by Baptism in the Church, than is pretended in the Meetings. And I can esteem such Children, but in the Order of Catechumens, until they make the Stipulations themselves at Confirmation, or at the Eucharist.

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If by *signally owned*, Mr. Hobart intends any Events or Influences by which GOD has testified that he owns and approves their Constitution, as it is Anti-Episcopal, and opposite to the national Establishment, it would have been very much to his Purpose to have related some of the most remarkable of those Events, that they might be fairly examined, to try what Evidence might be gathered from them, of GOD's owning their *Constitution*, as he calls it, very improperly ; for all the Approbation their religious Models have had, considering their Varieties, Mutations, Fluctuations, Uncertainties, &c. will not make a Thing that may be called a *Constitution*. The Apostles of our Saviour were *signally owned* of GOD, in preaching the Doctrines of Christ, and testifying that GOD had raised him from the Dead, and thereby declared him to be *his Son*, the Messiah promised, and that there was no other Name given among Men whereby they could be saved. The *signally* owning them was by such Events, as demonstrated a Divine Power co-operating with and in them : GOD bearing them *Witness both with Signs and Wonders, and diverse Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghost*, Heb. 2. 4. If Mr. Hobart has any Thing of this Nature to produce it may be called *signally* owned of GOD ; but if he means nothing but their boasted Conversions and some Instances of Zeal in their Ways of Religion ; it will appear nothing miraculous, and perhaps all he means by Religion in the *Power and Practice* of it promoted by their Ways, will not exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, nay perhaps it will not exceed the Righteousness of Quakers, or even many bigotted Papists : I hope it will not affront his humble Saintship, to tell him that Multitudes in the Church of *England*, may be found, whose Practice is a much better Transcript of our Lord's Example and the Precepts of his Gospel, than such as he would boast of.

What I have said already renders it needless to enlarge here, only I would take Notice, that the greatest Zeal and Application in some Instances, nay many Instances of Duty, may consist with a State of great Imperfection and Hypocrisy ; and always does so, when
some

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some essential Part of our Duty is overlooked and neglected : The Jews in the Prophet *Micah's* Time were very zealous in observing the Rites of *Moses's* Law ; they spared no Cost for Sacrifices and Offerings, and when the Lord sends his Prophet to expostulate with them for Ingratitude, they return a murmuring discontented Answer, as if they could not devise what more GOD would have of them ; *Micah* 6. 6, 7. *Where-with shall I come before the LORD, &c. — Shall I offer my First-born for my Transgression, &c.* i. e. Will not GOD be pleased unless we offer our Children in Sacrifice as the Heathen do ? The Prophet lets them know that their Murmuring was without Reason, they had Means enough to know what GOD required of them. Verse 8. *He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good, &c.* They seemed to think, no Fault could be found with a People so godly : But yet were very defective in some Parts of their Duty as important as their Godliness. Obedience to Superiors and Governors, in Church and State is an important Duty for Christians, to follow Peace with all Men and Holiness, to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace ; such Duties require Submission to the Government and Orders of the Church : If our Bishops are vested with Power from Christ, as Governors in his Church, let those who are taught to despise them, and those that usurp their Authority and persuade others to act in Opposition to and Contempt of them, consider the Consequence of their Behaviour, and not suffer themselves to be flattered into an Opinion of their great Sanctity, while their Practice is so wide of their Duty in Instances of so much Importance, and on which more may depend than they, at present, may be aware of. I only add my earnest Wishes and Prayer to GOD that all those that are in Error may be brought into the Way of Truth and Salvation. And am,

Sir,

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Your affectionate Friend, &c.

Rye,

June 22. 1747.

J. Wetmore.



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MR. *Hobart* Page 26, expresseth a great Veneration for our Fore-Fathers, and represents as though all Manner of Irreligion and Profaneness was owing to the Prevalence of the Church of *England*. — In this he shews himself to be the Reverse of our good Fore-Fathers ; for they acknowledged with the utmost Gratitude that all the Good, that was in them they derived from the Church of *England*, whom they call their dear Mother. — Mr. *Hobart* therefore, and such as he, are degenerate Children of our good Fore-Fathers ; and know not what they really were. — Let him therefore and every one that pretends to follow them, hear what the chief and best of them say in their Letter to the Bishops and Clergy and People of the Church of *England*, whom they call their Fathers and Brethren, from on Board the Ship *Arabella*, dated April 7. 1630. intreating their Prayers for their Prosperity. — Their Words are these.

“ We beseech you therefore by the Mercies of the Lord
“ Jesus, to consider us as your Brethren, standing in very
“ great Need of your Help, and earnestly imploring it.
“ And however your Charity may have met with some Oc-
“ casion of Discouragement through the Misreport of our
“ Intentions, or through the Disaffection or Indiscretion of
“ some of us, or rather among us ; (for we are not of those
“ that

POSTSCRIPT.

“ that dream of Perfection in this World,) yet we desire
“ you would be pleased to take Notice of the Principals
“ and Body of our Company, as those who esteem it our
“ Honour to call the Church of *England*, from whence we
“ rise, our dear Mother ; and we cannot part from our
“ native Country, where she specially resideth without much
“ Sadness of Heart and many Tears in our Eyes ; ever
“ acknowledging, that such Hope and Part as we have
“ obtained in the Common Salvation, we have received in
“ her Bosom, and sucked from her Breasts. We leave her
“ not therefore as loathing that Milk wherewith we were
“ nourished there, but blessing GOD for the Parentage and
“ Education, as Members of the same Body, shall always
“ rejoice in her Good, and unfeignedly grieve for any Sor-
“ row that may ever betide her, and, while we have Breath,
“ sincerely desire and endeavour the Continuance and A-
“ bundance of her Welfare, with the Enlargement of her
“ Bounds in the Kingdom of Christ Jesus.— Be pleased
“ therefore, Rev’d Fathers and Brethren to help forward
“ this Work now in Hand,” &c. &c. The whole deserves
to be written in Letters of Gold.— This Letter was
signed by *John Winthrop* Governor, *Richard Saltonstall*,
Isaac Johnson, *Thomas Dudley*, *William Coddington*, and many
more.— Thus spake the good Fathers and Founders of *New-
England* ; and would to GOD Mr. *Hobart* and all their
Children had the same blessed Temper which they had, and
would still and forever speak as they did.

THE END.

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2 JY 61

THE END

